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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system" (JIU/REP/91/7).

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ANNEX

JIU/REP/91/7
Geneva, October 1991

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE POST CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

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Table of Contents

		Paragraphs	Pages
	Executive Summary		iii
I.	Introduction	1 - 6	1
II.	Background to the post classification system...	7 - 17	2
III.	Implementation and Monitoring of Classification Standards.....	18 - 164	5
	A. United Nations Secretariat.....	18 - 30	5
	B. United Nations Specialized Agencies.....	31 - 164	7
	1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	31 - 42	7
	2. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	43 - 55	9
	3. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).....	56 - 68	11
	4. International Labour Organisation (ILO)	69 - 85	13
	5. International Maritime Organization (IMO)	86 - 90	16
	6. International Telecommunication Union (ITU).....	91 - 101	17
	7. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).....	101 - 115	18
	8. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).....	116 - 124	20
	9. Universal Postal Union (UPU).....	125 - 134	21
	10. World Health Organization (WHO).....	135 - 144	22
	11. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).....	145 - 154	25
	12. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)	155 - 164	26
IV.	Conclusions.....	165 - 188	28
V.	Recommendations.....	189 - 190	33
Annex I	Description of the International Civil Service Commission Post Classification System.		
Annex II	The Common Classification of Occupational Groups (CCOG).		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The post classification system was established over ten years ago in response to a need felt by the organizations of the United Nations system to introduce new techniques of personnel management. Advanced technologies and the responsibility for the organizations to have a staff of diverse competences and experiences were the main criteria in choosing the post classification concept as a valuable tool in this respect, ensuring "equal pay for equal work" to everyone.

The Joint Inspection Unit, which has been involved from the initial stages in this project, was requested by one of the organizations to undertake the study in order to analyse the results the application of the system in all the organizations, and to seek ways to improve it and make it somewhat more flexible, while maintaining the integrity of the objectives of the concept.

Chapter II presents the background of the post classification system and how the common standards were finalized and put into practice.

The presentation of Chapter III may differ from most JIU reports. Its content represents the implementation of the post classification system, organization by organization, underlining its advantages and disadvantages. Purposely, the Inspector decided to give as much space as possible to the organizations in expressing their views on the subject matter. The study is thus intended to serve as a reference tool.

In Chapter IV the Inspector has analysed the advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system as presented by the organizations and concludes that, while there are some problems and disadvantages seem to be more often discussed than advantages, the system is a sound and useful management tool.

In Chapter V, a number of recommendations are put forward by the Inspector with a view to alleviating some of the drawbacks in the application of the post classification system, while at the same time suggesting other parallel topics for possible further study, which are closely linked with the improvement and strengthening of personnel services, the normal expectations of staff, and the necessary flexibility sought by all parties.

I. INTRODUCTION

1 . The present study has been undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit in response to a request by UNESCO to make "recommendations for improving the classification system and perhaps show the desired flexibility and quality objectives that could be achieved while maintaining a sound and secure system for staff" in the United Nations common system.

2 . Since its inception, the JIU has conducted a number of studies on management problems in the organizations of the common system and recommended the introduction of new managerial concepts for improving the efficiency of the organizations within the United Nations system. The concept of post classification and its introduction for the common system in the overall framework of career planning was one of JIU's proposals in its report of 1971 1/. The present study is thus part of a sequence of follow-up actions or recommendations of previous reports.

3 . The Inspector undertook a number of visits to organizations of the common system and requested the views of those he was unable to visit personally. The following organizations participated in the study: United Nations Headquarters, United Nations Office at Geneva, FAO, IAEA, ICAO, ILO, IMO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO and WMO. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) were also consulted on several occasions.

4 . Administrations, as well as staff representatives in several of the organizations, gave their opinions on the subject matter and these are reflected in the study.

5 . The report is intended to serve as a reference tool on the background and implementation of the post classification system. It aims at underlining both the advantages and disadvantages of the concept and suggesting possible improvements in its application.

6 . The Inspector wishes to express his appreciation for the interest shown by the participating organizations and for their invaluable co-operation in the preparation of the report.

1/ Report on personnel problems in the United Nations. JIU/REP/71/7.

II. BACKGROUND TO THE POST CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

7 . In its early stages (from 1946 to 1949), the United Nations based its grading structure on the then existing United States system, but modified it by combining professional, administrative and clerical work in one category. (Until 1949 the United States had different categories for professional, administrative and clerical groups.) The grading structure ranged from the lowest grade level GS-1 to the highest GS-19 and included posts relating to professional, specialist, para-professional or clerical work. The grade levels were determined by job evaluation (job classification). The "Provisional Salary and Wage Administration Plan" clearly defined the concept of job classification as the basis for establishing salaries:

> "The provisional plan is designed to provide compensation commensurate with duties and responsibilities assigned to the various posts through the Secretariat. It does not deal with the individual fitness of the incumbent. Efficiency, length of service, special skills or other personal characteristics of the incumbent are not considered as factors in evaluating the post".2/

8 . The United Nations Secretariat applied standard job descriptions as a classification tool covering all categories and grades of posts.

9 . As a classification tool the classification work was carried out by the Classification and Salary Standardization Section in the Bureau of Personnel. As regards classification, the specific mandate of the Section was defined as follows:

> "Administers the classification programme of UNO by advising management on classification matters, developing or refining categories and grades where needed;
>
> "makes classification surveys to maintain uniform standards within and between departments and services".3/

10 . In 1950, the United Nations introduced a new grading structure establishing four different categories of staff (directorate, professional, special services and general services categories). Later, these categories were reduced to the present two categories, namely professional directorate category and general service.

11 . Over the years, the classification of posts was increasingly criticized as being too rigid and impersonal. The personal qualities of incumbents were also considered important in determining grade level. As a result, the classification of posts was gradually abandoned.

2/ Secretary-General Bulletin 19, 3 May 1946.

3/ Internal UN document SG/AD/W.30/Rev. 2, p. 61.

12 . More than 20 years later the need for a classification system was recognized once again. In 1971 the Joint Inspection Unit conducted a study on the United Nations personnel problems and proposed a classification system as a prerequisite for long-term recruitment planning, establishment of occupational groups and other personnel reforms 4/. A year later another study conducted by the Administrative Management Service (AMS) identified serious deficiencies and problems due to the absence of an orderly classification system and also strongly recommended the introduction of a classification system.

13 . In 1973, the Secretary-General recommended to the General Assembly that a classification system be designed and implemented, with three main objectives:

1. That the relationship between the duties of a post and the grade attached to it be consistent;

2. That staff members performing the same duties and responsibilities be graded in the same way, irrespective of when and under what conditions they were initially recruited; and

3. That the levels and titles of posts should have a clearly defined meaning for budgetary and personnel purposes 5/.

14 . In the 1974 Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly, the objectives of a classification system and how it should be established were stated as follows:

> "As regards the classification standards required for each occupational group, AMS has proposed that a job classification system covering all posts in the Secretariat be instituted in order to ensure that (a) there will be a consistent relationship between the duties of a post and the grade attached to it; (b) staff members performing the same duties and responsibilities will be graded in the same way, irrespective of when and under what conditions they were initially recruited; and (c) the levels and titles of posts will have a clearly defined meaning for budgetary and personnel purposes. Accordingly, it was recommended that, in order to establish a properly conceived and elaborated job classification system, which would be administered by the Office of Personnel Services, the assistance of outside experts be obtained to plan and develop the system and to train existing professional staff in this work. The Secretary-General is in complete agreement with, and attaches priority to, this recommendation."6/

4/ Report on personnel problems in the United Nations. Op.cit.

5/ A/C.5/1522.

6/ UN document A/C.5/1601, para. 10.

15 . The International Civil Service Commission was established in 1975 by the General Assembly with the overall aim of developing "a single unified international civil service through the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements" (Art. 9 of the ICSC Statute). The Commission was to "...establish job classification standards for all categories of staff in fields of work common to several of the organizations. It (the Commission) shall advise the organizations on the development of consistent job classification plans in other fields of work". (Art. 13). The ICSC accepted that common job evaluation methods be developed to improve the means by which the United Nations system professional salaries could be compared to those of the comparator country (Noblemaire Principle).

16 . The Commission developed the "Master Standard of Job Classification" in 1978 and recommended its implementation by all organizations of the United Nations system as of 1 January 1981. The same was to be undertaken for the general service posts classification standards by duty station. The organizations supported the development of the Master Standard, although particular contexts had to be taken into account in its application.

17 . In line with the Master Standard, a Common Classification of Occupational Groups (CCOG) was developed for defining occupations, both professional and non-professional. An illustration of the ICSC Post classification system is given in Annex I and a concise description of the CCOG appears as Annex II of this report.

III. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS

A. United Nations Secretariat

General statement

18 . Ten years after the introduction of the post classification system and the use of the master standard, the position of the United Nations secretariat stands as follows.

19 . Beginning on 1 February 1981 common job classification standards for professional posts, consisting of the Master Standard (Tier I) and occupational standards (Tier II) established by the ICSC are being implemented. The classification system is designed to ensure consistency between the actual duties and responsibilities of a post and its grade; to guarantee equity in grading similar duties and responsibilities performed by various staff members throughout the Secretariat; and to assure clear definitions of post titles and levels for budgetary and personnel purposes.

20 . As for general service posts, common classification standards are used at Headquarters and are being implemented at Vienna. At Geneva, current classification standards will be replaced by a common standard for all United Nations organizations and agencies. At other duty stations, common classification standards promulgated by ICSC are being implemented in the regional economic commissions and at small- and medium-sized duty stations. On the basis of experience gained from the implementation of classification standards at non-headquarters duty stations, the organizations of the United Nations common system have agreed that a common global classification standard be implemented.

Classification procedures

21 . Professional posts are classified by two classification officers independently on the basis of job descriptions and other relevant information using the Master Standard/Tier II. The classification decision is made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management.

22 . Initial classification of General Service posts in Regional Economic Commissions is conducted by Classification Officers from the Office of Human Resources Management and reviewed by a local staff-management body. The final results of the initial classification are approved by Headquarters on behalf of the Secretary-General. At major duty stations, e.g. Geneva and Vienna, the responsibility for classification of General Service and related categories posts is delegated to the respective Director-General. For classification of posts at small- and medium-sized duty stations, the common classification standards established by ICSC are applied in conjunction with salary surveys.

Career development and promotion review

23 . Although not the theme of the study, career development and promotion are closely linked with the classification concept. It is the reason why they are discussed in the report. The United Nations has no career development plan for the professional category so far. For the General Service category at Headquarters, a Handbook on Career Development was published in 1990 by the Office of Human Resources Management to assist General Service staff in planning their careers and providing them with pertinent information on career

opportunities, inter alia, job requirements and availability of posts in various Departments. A career counselling system is being set up to assist the staff in career planning.

24 . Promotion review is the sore spot. The right to have an annual promotion review is clearly stated in the Staff Rules, but the widely-spread idea is that the promotion exercise has been replaced by the "vacancy management scheme" or by the "reclassification" of posts. The Promotion Committee is only a "screening" Committee which does not seem to have any real power of decision.

25 . The staff representatives are of the opinion that linked grades should be reintroduced to redress this shortcoming. Personal grading is not yet favoured as it is regarded as a form of favouritism.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

26 . Reclassification of existing posts normally takes place in the context of preparation of the programme budget. Requests for reclassification must reflect significant changes in the programme of the Office concerned, e.g. newly mandated activities which cannot be absorbed by existing posts or a major reorganization of the Office. Such requests, prior to submission to the Compensation and Classification Service/OHRM, are reviewed by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance (OPPBF) from a programmatic and budgetary point of view. Only those posts for which a budgetary allocation is endorsed by the OPPBF are forwarded for classification review. Such review will normally necessitate submission of a new job description, showing an increase in the post's duties and responsibilities, as well as an indication of the post's relationship to other posts in the programme area. The results of the classification review are normally reviewed and endorsed by a management committee comprising high level officials from the programme planning and budgeting, and human resources management, offices.

27 . Reclassification of a post does not affect the contractual status, salary and other entitlements of an incumbent of a post. Staff whose posts are graded at a level below their personal level retain their grades until an appropriate post level is found. Staff whose posts are graded at a level above their personal grade retain their grades and may be promoted to the higher grade only after the regular review process and in so far as the satisfactory performance of the functions and responsibilities of the post may demonstrate their ability to perform at the higher level.

28 . Since promotion opportunities - as mentioned above - have diminished in number, staff tend to consider reclassification as a means of obtaining a higher grade and the pressure tends to increase on the administration.

29 . Staff and administration participate in the classification appeal process.

30 . Staff who believe that the classification of their post is not reflected by the adequate level may file an appeal to a) the Classification Appeals and Review Committee, for professional posts; b) the General Service Classification Appeals and Review Committee for general service category posts. In this connection programme managers may also appeal a decision on the classification of posts of their staff. Appeals may pertain to the correctness of application of the classification standards to the post under review.

B. United Nations Specialized Agencies

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

General statement

31 . The application of the post classification system at FAO reflects its long experience with that system. It has been applied in the Organization for well over 30 years. It is strongly supported by the management of the Organization and well accepted by its staff, whether in the professional or in the general service category. In this regard, it is stressed that the application of the post system entails a comprehensive approach, taking into account all aspects of human resources management, with a view to providing the most effective service to the Member States. In the classification process programme priorities, organizational implications, and human concerns are linked and considered. Consequently, it is not a mechanical process, but one that considers the total needs of the Organization. The classification process involves a number of stages starting with the managers' requirements, the classification experts' input and finally a detailed review by a select management committee, called the Establishments Committee. In this manner career paths are considered and identified.

32 . From the point of view of FAO the post classification system offers two important benefits: it demonstrates objectively the level and value of the work performed, and it quantifies the work, compensating the staff accordingly. In this latter regard the post classification system also keeps the staff cognizant of the need to perform at a required level. They know that the taking-on of higher-level duties can result in a justifiable increase in grade. Their colleagues see this and understand that staff are paid according to the value of their work.

33 . Further, it facilitates the budgetary process within the approved programme priorities and provides for the required planning of human resources particularly in periods of budgetary constraints when such a system is considered important. Otherwise planning would become extremely difficult and be heavily weighted in favour of individual staff requirements rather than programme priorities in line with the wishes expressed by the Governing Bodies

34 . FAO considers the post classification system an integral part of its management style and process. While it is recognized that it is not perfect, its long history in FAO is proof of its value and the built-in flexibility necessary to respond to current needs and ever-changing requirements.

Classification procedures

35 . FAO uses the ICSC Classification Standards. A specific procedure is used for post classification. The results are reviewed and endorsed by the Establishments Committee, composed of senior officials appointed by the Director-General.

36 . Classification is a comprehensive programme and it is actually the supervisors and managers who have the principal responsibility for this function. The Personnel Division provides the technical classification expertise by trained classifiers. The final authority rests with the above mentioned Establishments Committee.

37 . The classification process is purely a management function and consequently staff representatives are not associated with the process. However, in this respect it must be added and emphasized that the selection process includes and involves staff representatives. This latter area is believed to be appropriately designated for staff participation.

Career development and promotion review

38 . FAO's approach to career development involves staff development by means of a process whereby staff are given opportunities to grow professionally through the use of progressively broadening assignments offering exposure to new tasks and concepts. For both its professional and general service staff, FAO utilizes lateral assignments (at the same grade level). The professional staff are also provided with opportunities to participate both in internal and external training programmes and sabbaticals. FAO is actively pursuing policies that enhance career development. However, the problems of career development and promotion opportunities are in fact more a function of the compensation level available to professional staff rather than of any inherent rigidities in the classification system. The P-1 and P-2 salary levels are too low to attract professional staff. The result is that professional staff are brought in at a higher grade level thus reducing prospects for further advancement.

39 . While FAO does not conduct an annual promotion review, this is undertaken as part of the biennial review for the Programme of Work and Budget. It is at this point that any discrepancies between the level of the post and the duties and responsibilities of an incumbent of a post are reconciled. In addition urgent cases falling into this category can also be taken up during the biennium, applying what is called in FAO the counter-balancing process. This requires that an equivalent level vacant post be identified for downgrading, thereby limiting grade inflation.

40 . In FAO there is no objection to double-grading of posts if it enhances recruitment of junior, less experienced candidates. However, classification guidelines preclude double-grading of posts for the sole purpose of providing artificial "promotional" opportunities to staff for the next higher level(s) without an identifiable change in duties and responsibilities. This is not considered to be a career ladder but simply post level inflation, or at best some dubious reward for longevity in the same post.

41 . FAO does not upgrade staff members above the grade of their post or give personal grades. There are a few staff members who now occupy posts of a grade below their personal grade but these are a result of special circumstances such as when the staff member was required to change location and a post of comparable level was not available. A typical example of this would be the situation where a staff member returns from a field assignment to Headquarters at a time when no suitable post is available. Under this circumstance the staff member would be permitted to retain the current grade until such time as a post at the correct grade becomes available.

Appeals procedures

42 . The FAO Appeals Committee reviews appeals on post classification. There has been only one appeal of this type which reached the Tribunal level in the past ten years. Furthermore, the Establishments Committee also reviews cases when the divisional management disagrees with the result of a classification action. In fact, in many cases, such an appeal could be the result of a staff member's disagreement which is in turn supported by the divisional management.

2. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

General statement

43 . The Agency has applied the post classification system during five consecutive years of zero growth budget and has found it invaluable not only in controlling expenditures but also in ensuring a high degree of equitable remuneration among employees. When properly applied, the professional and general service classification systems have ensured "equal pay for work of equal value". As this system is essentially that of "rank-in-post" instead of "rank-of-man", staff are remunerated according to the value of their post and consequently must acquire a higher-rated post if they wish to be promoted and enjoy better career perspectives . This is normally done by applying for a vacant post at a higher level in competition with other inside or outside candidates. The exception to the rule occurs when duties of a post evolve to such an extent as to require classification upgrading. In such cases a staff member may in fact grow with his/her post.

44 . The common classification system developed by the ICSC for professional posts is applied at IAEA. For the general service category, the post classification standard developed jointly by the Vienna-based organizations and sanctioned by the ICSC and CCAQ is used.

45 . IAEA stated that, even in difficult financial times and limited organizational expansion, it is unlikely the Organization would consider abandoning the post classification system even if it were proved to lessen employee expectations and morale. At the same time, it is clear that implementing system-wide standards which meet all the needs of each organization may prove difficult in the long run.

Classification procedures

46 . Post classification is usually done by internal classifiers and occasionally by consultant external classifiers. Staff representatives are only associated with the review process as members of appeal committees where a staff member appeals against an administration decision to classify a post at a specific level.

Career development and promotion review

47 . It is often claimed that there is no career development at IAEA and this may be true if career development is taken literally. Since all vacant posts are open to all qualified staff and since the staff is accorded a certain preference over outsiders, staff do have an opportunity to rise through the ranks in the Agency. It is reported that a great number have done so and continue to be promoted from lesser posts to ones of a higher grade. Because the Agency is highly centralized (over 90 per cent of staff are located in Vienna) there is little need for a "rank-of-man" system which is often found in decentralized organizations requiring regular staff rotation (military, foreign services, multinationals).

48 . The Agency's career development programme exists as a function of the co-existence of a number of independent but inter-related policies and systems: post classification, open competition for all vacant posts, performance appraisals, external training, on-the-job training and opportunities for temporary assignment to higher level posts. A programme for employee career counselling is under consideration.

49 . Vacancies are advertised throughout the year as they occur and are filled with the staff meeting the requisite qualifications or qualified outsiders. Promotions via such appointments occur the year round. Once per year a promotion panel reviews the promotion of staff who were appointed at a grade less than that of their post due to lack of specific qualifications (usually in years of experience) or whose post was reclassified. This exercise is part of the budgeting process, as any increase in number of posts or aggregate classification levels of P-posts must be submitted in the budget proposals to the Board of Governors.

50 . IAEA has introduced certain administrative measures to reduce such upgradings since over time they would facilitate what is generally called "grade creep". First, supervisors are obliged to ensure that responsibilities and duties assigned to a staff member are commensurate with the approved classification of the post the staff member occupies.

Personal promotion system

51 . The practice of giving a personal grade to staff has been greatly discouraged in recent years on the belief that the grades of staff should virtually always reflect the grades of the posts they occupy. There are only four cases in the professional category where incumbents have been given grades higher than those of the posts which they occupy due to exceptional circumstances such as performing exceptionally over an extended period. There are no personal upgradings in the general service category: grade differences have resulted from higher level staff being assigned to lower level posts while retaining their former grade levels.

52 . Currently only eight senior staff members (P-5/D-1) have been exceptionally accorded personal grades. IAEA is considering implementing "personal merit promotions" in accordance with the relevant ICSC recommendation.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

53 . All requests for reclassification are reviewed by a Human Resources Advisory Group to determine the advisability of reclassification action from the view point of management considerations, including the following:

/...

- Staff utilization, including the evolution of the distribution of duties and responsibilities in the programme area concerned;

- Programme trends in the area concerned, as may be indicated by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), governing organs or the Director-General;

- Evolution of the overall organizational and grading structure, as well as the effect of an approved reorganization, if any, in the area concerned;

- Announced personnel policies or the results of past reviews of the post, group of jobs or organizational area concerned.

54 . If the Advisory Group comes to the conclusion that the request for reclassification is inadvisable for management reasons, no reclassification action is taken and the supervisor is requested to ensure that the duties and responsibilities of the staff member do not exceed those associated with the grade of the staff member's post.

55 . No appeals have been lodged in the past two years.

3. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

General statement

56 . ICAO's expressed position is that perhaps the most important aspect of a job classification system is that it preserves the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. The implementation of such a system regularizes the grading of posts and discourages uncertainties in grading, which may lead to personal favouritism and discrimination. It is thus an integral part of human resource management and plays a crucial role in the administration of ICAO.

Classification procedures

57 . For professional posts at Headquarters and in the Regional offices, ICAO applies the common classification system as developed by the ICSC, Tier I and Tier II standards.

58 . The classification standard for general service posts at ICAO Headquarters was approved by the Secretary General on 2 July 1990. The confirmation rate of the jobs classified in the test group was 86 per cent to the ranked levels of a group of representative jobs earlier selected, so the joint staff-management Working Group felt confident in recommending its adoption to the Secretary General. To date, 99 jobs have been classified using this standard. Sixty-three posts (64 per cent) have been confirmed, 25 (25 per cent) have been upgraded, 6 (6 per cent) have been downgraded (although incumbents of filled posts are retaining their previous grade) and 5 (5 per cent) are new. The fairly high number of upgradings is partly because ICAO had a sizable number of reclassification requests pending, some for years when the standard was put into use. These requests resulted from, inter alia, a reduction of the ICAO establishment, with the result that duties and responsibilities often had to be given to remaining and sometimes junior staff. It is expected that in classifying the balance of ICAO's 392 general service jobs at Headquarters, this percentage will drop. For general service

posts in the Regional Offices, the ICSC's Common Classification Standard for Small and Medium-sized Duty Stations is used, except where this standard has not yet been adopted, in which case the classification standard of the lead agency is followed.

59 . The grade of staff is governed by the level of the post and exceptions to this are rare at ICAO. In some cases, a staff member is appointed at a grade lower than a post only if he does not possess all the qualifications required for a post. This generally lasts for a year, after which the supervisor certifies that he is fully able to exercise all the duties and responsibilities of the post. The incumbent will then be placed at the level of the post.

Career development

60 . ICAO does not have a career development programme as such. In view of the small size and technical specialization of the organization, the recurring serious financial problems, and the low turnover/vacancy rate, it is felt that a formalized career development plan is not feasible.

61 . The number of posts in the regular programme of the organization is finite, and is fixed at the time ICAO's programme budget is approved. Turnover in the general service category due to retirements, resignations, etc., is low. Hence, a staff member normally has to wait until a post falls vacant before he/she can apply for it. The possibilities for gradual career advancement are therefore small in an organization the size of ICAO. In the professional category posts are very technical and specialized, which reduces considerably the possibility of moving people to other posts. Once in a while, perhaps because of having to freeze posts or because of the introduction of new technology, staff are given additional duties and responsibilities, but such actions are the exceptions, not the rule.

62 . Career development is subject to many different interpretations. It could be interpreted to include: a) the various jobs a staff member may aspire to and be qualified for; and b) the steps taken by the staff member and the organization to prepare him/her for a more responsible post. In the latter connection, ICAO assists staff in in-house or outside job-related activities such as language, shorthand and computer training. Furthermore, in the selection procedures internal candidates are given preference. In the general service category most vacancies are only advertised internally and in the professional category all staff members who apply for a post are always considered by the Appointment and Promotions Board.

63 . "Tracking of Posts" is generally no problem in ICAO. They have become fairly well computerized, and Bureaux and Offices get frequent reports on staff and posts. What seems to be the real problem is just not having enough posts (especially in these times of financial difficulties) to get all the work done.

Promotion review

64 . ICAO does not have an annual promotion review. Promotions virtually always result from staff applying and being selected for higher posts. An Appointment and Promotion Board reviews the candidatures of all qualified applicants and makes recommendations to the Secretary-General. All vacancies are announced to the staff and are open for competition.

65 . On the other hand, until 1988 a generous policy of granting personal upgradings to staff who met certain conditions was applied. These cases are now few, since it does not accord with the policy of equal pay for work of equal value.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

66 . Staff Rule 111.1 provides for an informal review action in respect of staff who consider their posts to be improperly graded. The review can be done by the supervisor or the Chief, Personnel Branch and in practice it is often done by both. There is also a provision for a formal review and appeal, but these are rare.

67 . The job classification reviews are undertaken by the Chief, Establishment and Studies Section. For posts up to the level G-6, the reviews are seen and approved by Chief, Personnel Branch; for posts from G-7 to G-9 by the Director, Bureau of Administration and Services; and for posts in the professional category by the Secretary-General. But in actual fact, the Chief of the Personnel Branch sees all classification reviews.

68 . Staff Representatives are not associated with the review process.

4. International Labour Organisation (ILO)

General statment

69 . Job classification has been applied to general service jobs since 1950 and to the professional and higher categories since 1974. The ILO has been a lead agency in the common system in developing and establishing job evaluation standards for the classification of professional posts and higher categories world wide and for the classification of general service jobs in Geneva; it has also actively participated in the development of post classification standards for general service jobs in the field.

70 . The present post classification system is considered as the basis for sound wage and salary administration as well as for the development of rational organizational structures and work relationships. It provides the basis for administering remuneration by determining the relative worth of jobs in a fair and equitable way, that is, by the uniform and constant application of pre-established and agreed criteria over time and by the establishment of an appropriate hierarchical order. The post classification system also forms the framework for staffing, staff development and the effective use of human resources by providing, in addition to the level of remuneration, information regarding training requirements, qualifications requirements and organizational structure.

71 . In organizations like ILO with limited organizational expansion and minimal turnover, reclassification of posts tends to become a - and perhaps the - major opportunity for promotion and career development. Job evaluation cannot, on its own, address all the needs of staff in terms of promotion, recognition, accountability, motivation etc., particularly when other sub-systems of human resources are inadequate or absent, e.g. career development. There is a need therefore to further integrate job evaluation into the broader organizational and personnel policy and to enhance the other human resource sub-systems.

Classification procedures

72 . Job classification is achieved through a continuous review machinery which aims at keeping the grades of jobs in line with functions actually performed by officials occupying them. Individual reviews of posts are undertaken by the Personnel Department, a) whenever a new position is created, b) when a re-organization involving a redistribution of work among posts in an organizational unit has taken place, or c) at the request of the responsible Chief, Personnel Department or an individual staff member when the duties and responsibilities have changed materially for at least one year.

73 . There is a Classification Unit composed of two professional classifiers and one assistant responsible for the classification of professional posts at Headquarters and in the field, general service in Geneva and senior general service jobs in the field - that is approximately 2000 posts. The job classification standards promulgated by the ICSC are used in determining the grades of posts. The occupational category allocation is made in accordance with the ICSC methodology for distinguishing between professional-level and general service level-work. This implies the use of the Common Classification of Occupational Groups and the overall definitions. The Master Standard (Tier I and Tier II) developed for the various organizational groups is used for the evaluation of professional posts in Geneva and in the field.

74 . For general service posts in Geneva a point factor rating system, elaborated internally in 1986, is presently used. This job classification standard served as a basis for the development of the common job classification standard for general service posts in Geneva which has recently been adopted by an interagency working group composed of both staff and administration representatives of the Geneva-based organizations. The ILO co-ordinated the technical development of the standard. The common standard was presented to the ICSC at its summer session of 1991 for promulgation.

75 . Classification of general service posts in the field has been delegated to the Regional Director. The Small and Medium-sized Duty Stations Classification Standard is implemented in conjunction with the conduct of salary surveys.

76 . Although the ongoing administration of the classification system is a management function, the participation of staff in the design of the system has always been considered of utmost importance by the Organization. As the general acceptance of post classification results depends on the evaluation system in use, staff representatives have been involved in the development of the post classification standards and in the establishment of post classification policies and procedures.

Career development and personal promotion

77 . There is no career development system, although staffing plans for departments are produced on a periodic basis. Virtually all vacancies are advertised and staff members are encouraged to apply. In these competitions a tripartite Selection Board (representatives of the administration, the Staff Union and independent members) reviews the merits of candidates and after consulting the supervisor, makes recommendations to the Director-General concerning the person to be selected.

78 . ILO introduced a personal promotion scheme in 1985 on a provisional basis, with the approval of the Governing Body. Such a scheme offers the possibility of promotion to officials at Headquarters and established external offices (with the exclusion of technical co-operation project personnel), whose contribution to the work of the Office goes beyond that normally associated with the position they occupied, but who have not been able to obtain a career advancement through other procedures (e.g. reclassification of the post as a result of a change in duties or the winning of a competition for a vacancy at a higher grade). It permits the promotion of general service officials up to the grade G-7, of professionals up to P-5, and to the top local grade for staff of external offices, provided that the promotion is not more than one grade above the classified grade of the post occupied.

79 . Staff meeting the requirements of length of service in the grade and quality and quantity of work are reviewed by the Selection Board which makes recommendations to the Director-General for approval. The ICSC has endorsed the use of personal promotions within certain limits, independently of other promotion procedures, at its 39th Session in September 1984.

80 . After more than four years of experience with the personal promotion scheme, the ILO administration as well as the Staff Union assessed its results in 1989. It appears that the personal promotion scheme is now regarded as not having achieved its intended goals and is creating other problems. In fact, it has only added to the existing problem of many people remaining at the top of the grades. It gives rise to inequity in remuneration for the same job and thus tends to depress staff morale. The staff at large have heavily criticized the system, and the Director-General has decided, on the basis of the Selection Board's assessment and the views expressed by senior managers and staff representatives, not to propose making the present scheme permanent. But this still does not solve the original problems which led to its establishment and which are real and in need of a solution.

81 . The ILO expressed the wish to give more attention to career planning and to movement of staff both professionally and geographically. Ways and means of doing so are currently under study. Efforts are also underway to strengthen staff training.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

82 . The duties and responsibilities assigned to all jobs are re-evaluated when they become vacant. This provides line management with additional flexibility to restructure and redefine duties and responsibilities within the organizational unit and assists in attaining other personnel objectives such as rejuvenation, staff development and mobility. This post classification review prior to staffing also provides a form of control on "grade creep".

83 . Jobs which have been upgraded as a result of a classification review are considered as vacant posts to be filled under the provisions of the Staff Regulations, in particular Article 4.2, Filling of vacancies, and Annex I, Recruitment procedures. In theory, this means that a post which is upgraded following a classification review can be open to competition. However, in reality, the overwhelming majority of incumbents are recommended by the Selection Board, for promotion to the new level of the post.

84 . The incumbent of a post which has been reviewed under the continuous review machinery may appeal the recommendation of the Personnel Department. Two independent and impartial bodies, the Professional Grading Appeals Committee and General Service Grading Appeals Committee, are appointed by the Director-General upon recommendation of the Joint Committee on Policies and Procedures to re-examine the proposed grade in light of the established classification standards and ensure that these standards have been applied correctly. The Committees recommend to the Director-General the appropriate grade of the post.

85 . A formal recourse mechanism is considered essential because of the important degree of judgment required on the part of the classifier when applying job classification standards. The present recourse mechanism, however, is considered lengthy and cumbersome and its administration is not always timely. This is attributed mainly to a high level of appeals and to the lack of resources allocated to this function.

5. International Maritime Organization (IMO)

General statement

86 . The IMO is in favour of a post classification system, as stated by other organizations. In effect, the post system and career development, in their view, complement each other. The grade of the incumbent is governed by the level of the post and there is no exception to that rule. The ICSC classification standards are used at IMO.

Classification procedures

87 . Classification is done by internal staff and the staff is associated in this process through the appointment and promotion machinery which embraces the classification process.

Career development and promotion review

88 . The IMO has a career development programme enshrined in its Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, which is based primarily on satisfactory performance and linked to organizational development as well as budgetary growth. Given the size of IMO, it is very difficult to secure job progressions and in general there is an upward drift in grading levels.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

89 . Prior to 1988 the classification of posts was conducted jointly by a committee composed of staff and management representatives. The recommendations from that body were submitted to the Secretary-General whose decision was final. Therefore an appeal procedure did not exist. In 1988, the Review Committee on Job Reclassification (RCJC) - applicable to general service posts only - was introduced as an appeal machinery. Classifications are carried out by the Administration, and incumbents of posts which are not deemed to merit an upgrading can present an appeal to the RCJC whose findings are then submitted to the Secretary-General for decision.

90 . In 1988, 40 general service posts were classified; of these, 28 were upgraded, about one out of three.

6. International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

General statement

91 . For ITU the classification system is useful and absolutely essential. It is linked with remuneration and ensures that the same post anywhere is paid on the same basis. At ITU all posts are advertised and all candidatures must be submitted by national administrations, therefore supported by the country of submission (professional posts).

Classification procedures

92 . The ICSC Master Standard is applied for all professional posts at Headquarters and some established field posts. P-1 and D-2 levels are not used at ITU, although some incumbents may receive the salary of a D-2 but not the grade, but this is particular to ITU. Sixty per cent of the posts of the organization are specialized at an average grade of P-4. Such posts are not difficult to classify.

93 . Classification of professional posts is done in the Personnel Department by one full-time classifier and two half-time classifiers. The same staff classifies the general service posts. ITU is a member of the Sub-Committee on Job Classification (for the common system) which meets every 18 months to compare and develop new tools.

94 . As regards classification of general service posts, the old system is still in use: a job description for a post as the basis for the grading of the post. The new system designed in collaboration with all the Geneva-based organizations will soon replace the old one. Their sample testing has brought up an average certification of 80 to 84 per cent and is based on the ILO point-factor system.

95 . Staff representation is required in the selection procedures. However, the recent High Level Committee, reviewing personnel management at ITU, has recommended that line managers have more say in the selection of staff.

Career development and promotion review

96 . ITU does not have a career development plan but uses in practice a case-by-case approach. Nothing formal has yet been designed.

97 . The problem of promotions, which is closely linked to classification, is a problem for all categories of staff. It is felt that the only way to move upwards is either to change jobs or have one's post reclassified.

98 . Since the majority of the staff have permanent contracts, and the very specialized staff already enter at a high grade, promotions are difficult to obtain. Most people are blocked at the top of their grade. The granting of longevity steps to general service staff cannot be a replacement for career development. There is a tendency to favour the introduction of a personal grade system, although favouritism there also should be avoided.

99 . Mobility, which could also be a way of obtaining a promotion, is difficult in a small organization and this adds to the problem of what is felt to be the rigidity of the classification system.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

100 . There is a Classification Review Board which is mandated to review the Personnel Department's classification recommendation. This Board has staff representatives and deals with both categories. It is distinct from the other appeals procedure involving administrative decisions (Appeal Board).

101 . There have not been many cases for appeal but ITU feels there is a need for a more efficient type of machinery. In their opinion, one of the questions which should first be answered is under what conditions a request for reclassification should start.

7. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

General statement

102 . UNESCO, the Organization requesting the present study, has in the last two years undergone a profound modification of its management policies and is still seeking ways to improve its management plans. To that end it requested the help of an independent Commission, under the chairmanship of Mr. Knut Hammarskjold, to advise the Director-General on ways and means of improving staff efficiency and management in the UNESCO Secretariat.

103 . Taking into account some of the recommendations of that Commission, the Director-General decided that a "Staff Development Division" would be created, composed of persons of commensurate expertise, competence, integrity, seniority, and experience and specialized in staff planning, job classification, counselling, training, as well as recruitment and evaluation techniques. The implementation of that decision is currently in progress.

104 . The first phase of the project deals with the overall survey of some 2,000 posts in the Organization. New job descriptions have been designed by the Classification Unit and distributed to all the staff at large. Briefings on how to fill in these forms have been given to key persons who in turn explained it to the staff. The objective of the exercise is to ensure that each post is classified at its proper level.

105 . Even more than in the other international organizations, UNESCO has been - and is still - confronted with financial difficulties resulting in a reduction of posts and whenever possible a declassification of some posts. The classification system applied in the Organization revealed discrepancies between posts of similar tasks and responsibilities. The workload facing the Classification Unit was such that it soon became clear that without proper job descriptions, it would be impossible to achieve an equitable classification of posts.

Classification procedures

106 . UNESCO applies to all professional posts the common classification standards developed by the ICSC. As for the general service and related categories' posts, UNESCO applies at Headquarters predetermined level standards. For general service posts away from Headquarters, the ICSC's common classification Standard for Small and Medium sized duty stations is used, except where the standard has not yet been adopted, in which case the classification standard of the lead agency is followed.

107 . The Classification Unit is staffed by two professional classifiers and two general service staff. This Unit is considered as being understaffed for the amount of work on hand, especially with the additional burden of evaluating - post by post - the 2,000 posts of the Organization with the new job descriptions.

108 . Besides their post classification duties, the classifiers also handle the requests for reclassification, for which long delays occur because of the lack of adequate staffing.

Career development and promotion procedures

109 . The grade of staff is governed by the level of the post. In some cases, however, the incumbent of a post may have a higher grade than the post itself, as a result of a personal promotion. The framework for such promotions was developed in 1989 in order to compensate staff whose performance was satisfactory but lacked prospects for promotion through recruitment procedures limited due to the diminishing number of vacant posts.

110 . The personal promotion scheme is being studied for improvement. But the feeling which prevails at different levels (administration and staff representatives) is that the linked grade system would be more equitable and offer a chance for a career, provided clear and reliable guidelines were set up for its application.

111 . There is much hope among the staff that the newly-established Staff Development Division will do more in the field of career development. At UNESCO the notion of career is closely linked with that of training in the context of an integrated personnel system. But some believe that such a Division can do very little if not composed of competent and sufficient specialists. The amount devoted to training activities is, as in practically all other organizations, very meagre and does not achieve much either for the Organization or its staff.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

112 . As applied by other organizations, a post may be subjected to reclassification if the duties attached to it have been modified so as to increase its responsibilities. During the preparation of the biennial programme and budget, the sector/bureau proposes the reclassification of posts, the duties and responsibilities of which are expected to change in order to meet the requirements of the new programme. After the approval of the Programme and Budget by the General Conference, the Director-General reviews the proposals, including the classification evaluations by the Classification specialists, and decides the final establishment and grading of posts for the entire biennium. The incumbents of posts which have been upgraded can be promoted six months after the reclassification of the post. Any staff member who considers that the grade of his/her post is not compatible with the relevant classification standards may submit a claim in writing for the upgrading of the post within two months of the publication of the approved staffing table for the biennium.

113 . Until recently a Joint Consultative Committee on Classification reviewed all negative replies. It has now been abolished and not yet replaced by another body.

114 . UNESCO classifiers also experience pressure from the staff for reclassification of their posts. Some feeling of isolation is expressed by these classifiers and the need for some other competent body to turn to in case of need. It is felt also that job descriptions are not always completed in accordance with the Master Standard for Classification which leads to errors and therefore requests for appeals.

115 . The use of computer-assisted classification would be welcome and the experience of UNDP in the field of classification is closely studied. However, having the machinery is not enough if the staff to operate it is insufficient.

8. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

General statement

116 . The new post classification system seems generally accepted in the Organization.

Classification procedures

117 . When classifying posts in the professional category and above, UNIDO uses the Master Standard developed by the ICSC in accordance with its Statutes and the Tier II Standards whenever applicable. In the mid-1980s the Vienna-based Organizations (UNIDO, IAEA, UNOV and UNRWA) developed common grading standards for staff in the general service and manual worker categories for consideration and approval by the ICSC. The standards were developed with the participation of administration and staff representatives in the form of a working group of the four organizations. They were assisted by consultants/classifiers.

118 . At the initial stage of implementation of the classification system, staff representatives were involved. However, the classification of each individual post is the responsibility of an internal classification officer. Classification decisions are not reviewed by outside classifiers.

Career development and promotion review

119 . Contrary to a generally held feeling, UNIDO considers that the post classification system does not necessarily hamper the career of staff. Indeed, in some instances it can even enhance the mobility of staff as it obliges them to apply for higher classified posts either within their field of activity or elsewhere in the Organization. Notwithstanding the principle of equal pay for equal work, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) recommended and the General Assembly approved that due regard should be given to a limited number of merit promotions despite the classification level of the post. The number of such promotions should, however, not exceed five per cent of the total number of established posts at a given level.

120 . In principle, a staff member is not promoted to a higher level unless the post he/she encumbers is classified at a higher level and a post budgeted at that higher level is available within his/her department (but not necessarily encumbered by that staff member).

121 . UNIDO has a training programme which includes language training and up-grading of skills. Moreover, it has just started developing and establishing a new system for making projections of human resources needs for the UNIDO Secretariat. This system started with briefing sessions to each department and a questionnaire addressed to them.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

122 . The classification procedure requires that upon receipt of the classification decision, the staff member concerned or his/her supervisor may require a clarification of classification decision. If the staff member or his/her supervisor is not satisfied with the clarification provided by the head classifier, he/she may file an appeal against the classification decision.

123 . The Classification Appeals Committee consists of a Chairman appointed by the Director-General from among a list provided by the Staff Council and an equal number of staff members nominated by the administration and the Staff Council. Thus, staff and administration are represented on an equal basis during the appeal process.

124 . Since UNIDO's conversion into a specialized agency in January 1986, the number of appeals has so far been limited. Out of 435 classified posts in the professional and higher categories, three were the object of appeals. In the general service and manual worker categories the number of appeals resulting from the initial implementation of the classification scheme between August 1982 and September 1987 was 54 against a total of 900 classified posts. Since 1988, 655 posts have been reviewed and three classification decisions have been contested. UNIDO's experience shows that the procedure of submitting a clarification of classification decision has reduced the number of appeals.

9. Universal Postal Union (UPU)

General statement

125 . Since UPU is a very small organization, post classification so far had not been applied in an absolutely rigid manner in order to allow for a minimum of career prospects, especially in the general service category.

126 . A post classification system exists for professional posts, the ICSC system in principle. A number of posts of heads of section are classified P-5/D-1. In order to be promoted from P-5 to D-1 the incumbent must have worked for at least five years in this post and give complete satisfaction in performing the tasks assigned. The assistant heads of section are all P-4. The remaining professional posts are all classified P-3. UPU has 52 professional posts altogether.

127 . Since no common job classification standard had existed for the general service posts in the Geneva-based United Nations organizations, UPU has not applied a strict job classification scheme for its general service staff. All general service posts have been classified on the basis of the new Geneva-based norms approved by the ICSC.

128 . Some discrepancies in the grading of posts and the grades of the general service staff have appeared after the introduction of the new Geneva standard between the grade of the post and that of the incumbent. Those with a grade level higher than their post remain at that grade, unless immediate transfers to a higher graded post is made possible.

Classification procedures

129 . Professional posts have been classified by internal staff. Up to now UPU has no professional classifiers of its own.

130 . The overall review of the general service posts classification was carried out by the Programme and Co-ordination Commission, composed of the Deputy Director-General (as chairman) and the three Assistant Directors-General of the International Bureau of the UPU. The chairman of the Staff Association attended as observer.

131 . Staff representatives were associated with the job classification exercise only at its conceptual stage.

Career development

132 . UPU being a very small organization, there are no real possibilities for a genuine career development programme. By handling the general service job classification system in not too rigid a manner it has been possible so far to offer a minimum of career prospects to general service staff members. As to professional posts, P-3 graded staff have to apply for P-4 posts, and P-4 staff have to apply for P-5 posts whenever they fall vacant, in order to be promoted.

Promotion review, reclassification and appeals procedures

133 . Two annual promotion reviews will be made in the future taking into consideration the classification criteria, professional experience and longevity in the grade as well as merits of the staff.

134 . UPU has established a Special Appeals Committee for the general service staff with the Chief of the Personnel Section as chairman and two other UPU staff members at grade G-6 or G-7 (incumbents of posts at that grade), one of them appointed by the Director-General, the other by the Staff Association. So far no appeal cases in either of the two staff categories have been filed, although some staff members have requested additional information on the classification of their post.

10. World Health Organization (WHO)

General statement

135 . WHO uses the ICSC Master Standard for its classification of professional posts.

136 . Of a total number of 4,600 staff members, more than 1,500 are in the professional and higher categories. One-third of these are located in Headquarters and two-thirds in the six WHO regions. It is the responsibility of Personnel at Headquarters to classify all professional posts administered directly by Headquarters, professional posts located in the six Regional Offices, all professional posts at grades higher than P-5 in the regions and general service posts administered directly by Headquarters. Regional Directors have authority to classify professional posts up to P-5 in country and intercountry projects and all general service posts in these projects and in the regional offices.

137 . Eighty per cent of the professional staff are health specialists, scientists and technical officers. Because of the highly technical nature of its staff, WHO has a large number of staff at grade P-4 and above. The P-5 posts represent some 35 per cent of the total number of professional posts. The P-1 grade is not used any more in WHO. WHO has a P-6 grade, which can be considered an extension of the P-5 grade, although the remuneration is equivalent to that of D-1. This D-1 grade is not used at Headquarters and is restricted to a very small number of programme Directors in the regional offices. There is also a small number of D-2 posts.

138 . As regards the classification of general service posts, it is proceeding well and the new common standards will be applied when they have been promulgated by the ICSC. While observing the objectives and methodology of the general service common classification system when it is officially promulgated, WHO has expressed the need to adapt the procedural aspects and relevant forms to its specific requirements without affecting its dedication to the common system.

Classification procedures

139 . The classification work is carried out only by internal staff. Under the Staff Rules of the organization, a review of the classification of posts can be requested at any time either by the incumbent or by his supervisor. Such requests are reviewd by the Classification Unit in the Division of Personnel. A recommendation is made for consideration by the responsible Classification Review Committee, which for senior posts at Headquarters and posts above P-4 is the Senior Staff Selection Committee, composed of the Assistant Directors-General at Headquarters with the Director of Personnel as its Secretary. The regional offices have their own Reclassification Committees for determined categories of posts and grades.

Career development and promotion review

140 . No career development plan as such exists at WHO. There are structural obstacles, due to the regionalized nature of WHO, and programmatic difficulties to be overcome in order to be able to formulate a career development plan as part of a general "Succession Plan" (to identify a set of staff members and a set of outside candidates potentially suitable for future vacancies, with or without additional training and within assigned time limits) over a determined period of time. WHO is progressing towards the formulation of such plans with the necessary feasibility study and preparation of the logistic support by the extensive use of informatics. With the inherent structural limitations and the constraints of its specific, evolving programmes, WHO expects to be able to establish a succession planning methodology which will also apply to career development. This will take three to four years to achieve.

141 . WHO has a large proportion of long-serving staff. One of the factors contributing to the very low rate of turnover in WHO, as far as professional staff are concerned, is the applicability of one single set of Staff Regulations, Rules and procedural provisions to all professional staff, wherever their location - in Headquarters, in the regional offices, in WHO Representatives' offices and in country projects. Therefore and in principle, professional staff can be reassigned from country projects to established offices without a change in status. WHO does not have the category of "experts" which can be found in other organizations with field activities. Duration of appointment, career development, mobility, promotion and all other relevant features are identical for all professional staff in the organization, although it has to face the well-known problem of mobility of staff on a voluntary basis between its various offices.

142 . Long service would of course lead to the problem of stagnation at the top of the grade, even after one or two promotions. For example, the organization has at present about 70 professionals and some 550 general service staff members who have between 20 and 30 years of service. WHO has constantly applied the classification standards in a very strict manner. For a long-serving staff member to obtain a promotion would require either a reclassification of his/her post, which calls for higher responsibilities and qualifications, or selection for a higher graded post. The present overlapping between grades does not allow for a solution to the top-of-the-grade problem over a reasonably long period of time and the same staff member may find himself again, after only a few years, at the top of the grade to which he has been promoted.

143 . WHO states that one possible answer to the problem would be the introduction of the concept of "evolving grades". This envisages that, when initially classifying a professional post, the Personnel Officer would determine how many extra points under the current point factor rating system would be needed to justify a higher grade. A procedure would be introduced whereby, when a staff member reaches the mid-point of his grade, a desk audit is conducted to determine if, due to the staff member's performance, the "deficit" in points has evolved upwards (or downwards) to possibly justify granting a post a higher (or lower) grade. A new appointment would of course always be at the original grade of the post. The same approach would apply to posts in the general service category when it has been possible to define and implement a point rating or equivalent system. WHO has no intention to deviate from the ICSC common Classification Standards, which will continue to apply. However, in the course of time, certain jobs clearly expand and become more useful to the organization than others - because of the experience gained by the incumbent, leading perhaps to increased initiative, independence of operation, supervisory responsibility or a higher level of contacts. In these cases, the post description changes <u>de facto</u> and two posts which were initially identical are no longer so. The concept of "evolving grades" would allow for the post to be reclassified to the higher grade originally considered when the "deficit" is calculated. It is believed that a system of "evolving grades" would provide greater motivation for staff and to some extent alleviate the problem of those who have been blocked at the top of their grade for many years.

Reclasssification and appeals procedure

144 . The rules and procedures applying to reclassification have been described in paragraph 139 above. As in other organizations, staff members may appeal decisions taken by the personnel administration on the grading of their posts to the responsible Board of Appeal.

11. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

General statement

145 . The Organization applies the classification system which works well. The ICSC Master Standard is being used for professional posts. WIPO has a staff of 125 professional posts and 267 general service posts, roughly 1/3-2/3.

146 . The main problem encountered is that of the remuneration system. WIPO needs specialized people and, like WHO, these are often recruited at a high level, thus creating a barrier for promotions.

Classification procedures

147 . Post classification is done by a staff member with specialized experience; WIPO, being a small organization, does not have a full-time classifier for this work.

148 . General service posts are still classified following the old system of job description. Introduction of the common classification standard for general service posts in Geneva will be considered after the ICSC has acted on the standard. The rate of confirmation as a result of the testing of that standard for WIPO was above 90 per cent. WIPO participated fully in the development of the common classification standard.

Career development and promotion review

149 . As far as general service posts are concerned, career paths may be clearly identified both within the different sectors of the organization and, to a lesser extent, across those sectors. With regard to professional posts, the problems besetting professional remuneration in Geneva severely limit the scope for promotion beyond more than one grade. There is a great need for staff with legal knowledge. The lack of career prospects is not related to the absence of training opportunities but to the fact that salaries are not very competitive with the outside market. The post system, as good as it may be, is based on a general salary scale. As a result of the poor competitiveness in salaries, the Organization claims, it has very few people from North America and 50 per cent of the posts are filled by Western Europeans. A career plan in this scheme does not seem easy to introduce, unless the salary problem is solved first.

150 . Promotion is viewed as being closely linked to classification. Many staff are at the top of their grade - as explained above - and the turnover is frequent in the professional category, staff being attracted elsewhere by a higher salaries and career prospects.

151 . However, professional and general service staff may apply for any job becoming vacant at any grade. There is no examination from general service to professional. The advantage in a small organization is that the staff is known and can be transferred to another post when special skills have been acquired.

Reclassification and appeals procedures

152 . When a post becomes vacant, its description is revised automatically and reclassification may occur. A Classification Committee advises the Director General on the grading standards to be applied within the Organization. The Committee is composed of four persons: a chairman, who is a person with experience of staff matters in intergovernmental organizations and who must not be a staff member of the International Bureau of WIPO, and three staff members of the International Bureau, of whom one is designated from a list of three names submitted by the Staff Council and one is the Head of Personnel of the International Bureau. The Committee is also consulted for advice on post descriptions which fall outside existing WIPO standards, as well as other cases of classification as the Director General may wish to refer to it. This committee meets once or twice a year, and deals also with general service posts.

153 . Appeals procedures are stated in the Staff Regulations. So far, WIPO has had no cases of appeal regarding the classification of posts.

154 . A staff member launching an appeal may defend his case alone, or request to be assisted either by the President of the Staff Council or an outside lawyer.

12. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

General statement

155 . The ICSC Master Standard has been used at WMO since 1980-81 for professional posts (including Directors). A general classification review was carried out in 1984-85 and, at the request of the Executive Council, a third general review was carried out in 1989-90. Following this review, a Continuing Review Machinery and a Recourse Procedure were established.

Classification procedures

156 . WMO has no in-house specialists dealing with classification, which has made it necessary to hire consultants to do the job. The results have usually been quite satisfactory with a high confirmation rate. All professional posts at Headquarters as well as at the two regional offices (Asuncion and Bujumbura) have been classified.

157 . When a post falls vacant and substantive changes are made in the job description, the post must be reclassified prior to issuing a vacancy announcement. There are some 40 experts working in the field (UNDP/WMO funded, and trust funds), but these posts are not classified.

158 . The classification of general service posts began in 1981 based on a point factor rating system which was established by an external consultant in consultation with staff and management. As from 1989 the general review of posts in the general service category was carried out using the ILO Classification Standard.

Career development and promotion review

159 . There exists no career development plan in WMO. A joint staff/ management working group is currently studying a possible new performance appraisal system. Another joint working group is studying how to elaborate an overall personnel policy for the Organization in which career development is one of the important items.

160 . General Service Category staff who wish to apply for a professional post do not need to pass an examination. A few general service posts have in the past been converted into professional posts.

161 . Since the introduction of the classification system, promotions of staff to a higher grade can be obtained only through reclassification of a post as a result of substantive change in duties and increase in responsibilities or by applying for another post at a higher level. Possibilities for promotion remain limited because of a lack of opportunities in a small organization. As an example, the P-5 level is saturated. The average entry age bracket is 35-45 and only a very few people have been able to make a career inside the Organization.

162 . What seems to be missing at WMO is a "recruitment level". The P-1 is non-existent and seldom is anyone hired below P-3. The classification system is therefore perceived as rather rigid and as controlling the promotion exercise.

163 . A proposal for the introduction of a personal promotion scheme was made two years ago to the Executive Council. This scheme was similar to the one that ILO had had on a trial basis for about six years. As a result of investigations, the Organization found that most other specialized agencies did not have personal promotion schemes. The Executive Council decided not to adopt the scheme.

Reclassification of posts and appeals procedure

164 . An on-going review mechanism has recently been installed to re-examine, case by case, posts that have been subjected to modification with higher responsibilities carried out for a period of at least 12 months. There is also a recourse procedure available. There is a fairly good level of transparency and staff who appeal can have access to their rating sheets.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

165 . The experience gained by the organizations in their application of the post classification leads to the following conclusions.

1. The post classification concept

166 . The post classification concept seems well understood at least by the administrations of the organizations and, as one classifier stated: "If it did not exist, it would have to be invented". However, staff representatives at large have expressed some doubts on its true value, especially as regards career prospects. Classification does not seem to be the real problem but rather its application, which is viewed as rigid and subject to financial constraints.

2. The classification system

167 . The post classification system is a comprehensive exercise involving inter alia personnel management activities, policies, programmes, priorities and human resources. The process also involves many different stages. To be meaningful, the classification function must be supported by adequate financial resources, which is seldom the case.

3. Recognized advantages of the system

168 . The organizations consider that perhaps the most important aspect of a post classification system is that it is an objective machinery which prevents abuse and preserves the principle of equal pay for equal work. It offers a better guarantee that the resources spent are used in the rational grading of staff.

169 . The post classification system is also an adequate framework for evaluating human resources and staff development. In addition, it helps establish the level of remuneration, information regarding training requirements, qualification requirements, and organizational structure. Although managers and supervisors generally consider post classification as a tool which might be adapted to their needs and allow proper job rotation and mobility for career planning purposes, this is more often the case when it is clearly understood, including the standards used in classifying jobs. Hence, the training and briefing of these key staff on their role in the process is important.

170 . The classification system is perceived by the staff as a means to guard against the arbitrary decisions of managers. However supervisors sometimes alter work assignments. They allow or even encourage certain staff to assume higher level duties and responsibilities, but not others. Conventional wisdom has it that supervisors should have this flexibility since they have overall responsibility to get the work done, and are supposed to know the strengths and weaknesses of their subordinates.

4. Disadvantages expressed

171 . Every system has drawbacks in its application - even with the best of will. The disadvantages noted below are the most commonly stated.

(a) The work of the classifiers

172 . All organizations indicated that they have classifiers. Most are officers, with one exception, working in the personnel department, and in some cases additional outside expertise is sought. Others have a well-established Classification Committee, but in general it appears difficult to attract staff into the classification function from within an organization. The reasons are mainly of two kinds: (a) lack of training for this specialized field;(b) staff also know that such a post is ungratifying. For these reasons, as well as the lack of necessary resources to fund additional posts for the work, many have indicated that the classification exercise is often understaffed.

173 . The "power" of decision is sometimes not well defined and classifiers are frequently subjected to heavy pressure on the part of staff who wish to have their post reclassified. This tends to unnecessarily absorb a lot of their time with no real positive impact for either side. Some administrations were of the opinion that at least a part of the responsibility of this job should be entrusted to independent experts, in order to relieve the pressure on the organizations' classifiers.

174 . This problem is a matter of serious concern in the organizations trying to find ways to improve the profile of the classification function and the credibility of the process. Another way, worth examining, which would alleviate some of the workload of classifiers would be the use of computer-assisted classification. The advantages are: less resources expended in the collection of information in the job analysis process and reduction in the perceived subjectivity and hence contentiousness of the classification process. This would in no way eliminate the role of the classifier, but rather would refocus it from an investigative emphasis to an advisory service concentrating on optimizing job design and the logical structure of posts within an organization unit.

175 . Among the suggestions offered in the course of the study, the Inspector examined one which might be worth pursuing, namely the creation of an Independent Classification Committee which could be composed of former staff members from several organizations, having considerable knowledge and experience in the field of classification, and who could assist from outside the classification units of organizations. This Committee would be empowered to review at regular intervals all posts classified and those presented for reclassification. Being external, the organizations would not subject them to pressure from the staff, and classifiers in the organizations would be somewhat

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relieved from it. However, this may be seen by some organizations as an excessive oversight of internal operations, and may in the long run become a costly exercise. Another alternative, more likely to interest the organizations as a useful classification mechanism, would be the creation of an independent Management Committee from within each organization to alleviate many of the problems discussed above in this report.

(b) Career development and promotion

176 . Although the report's objective is to show the advantages and disavantages of the post classification system in the light of ten years of experience, the notion of career prospect is closely interwoven with this system and can hardly be dealt with separately. The majority of organizations have indicated that no career development scheme exists in their organization and that there is a vacuum in this respect. Because of the "rigidity" of post classification and the lack of career prospects, together with financial austerity, promotions of staff tend to be either scarce or based on personal factors (personal promotion), thus adding to the frustrations of staff who do not benefit from it. The credibility and confidence that should be attached to the post classification exercise is often shattered as a result. This latter impression was felt by the Inspector in many of the organizations during the interviews with staff representatives as well as with personnel officers.

177 . In the absence of career development programmes, the sole means of rewarding a staff member is through promotion and staff now tend to regard post reclassification as an alternative to promotions.

178 . In the various opinions expressed by the different parties concerned, it is not sure that the "favouritism" aspect has totally disappeared. Administrations openly admit that heads of units, classifiers and personnel departments are subjected to heavy pressure on the part of dissatisfied staff requesting a promotion. If there is no strong and well-defined practice governing reclassification of posts, this is indeed a door open to requests, appeals and pressure being brought to bear on the decision-takers.

179 . As to equal pay for equal work, this may not be totally true, as explained by both sides: in some organizations a "personal promotion" system has been established to "reward" staff for exceptional merit or - more often - for longevity in the job, whether they perform more or better than another incumbent doing the same work. At the ILO a "personal promotion scheme" has been under a trial period for over four years, but reports indicate that it is far from being perfect and should not be made permanent. Some organizations reward staff with a personal promotion when they reach the highest step of their grade and have remained there for a certain number of years. Others grant an extra grade to staff near retirement, like a "life-long service promotion". However, it results in inequalities of pay, regarded by the staff not eligible for that promotion as an injustice thus adding to the existing frustrations of being stuck in one grade for many more years. The same is true when some staff have their post reclassified while excluding others performing the same tasks. The United Nations is also contemplating introducing a personal promotion scheme.

180 . The fact that staff of all categories are very dissatisfied as regards their career prospects, and are becoming discouraged as a result, should be taken seriously into account. Solutions should be sought and discussed by all parties concerned.

181 . If it is true that the classification system has been designed as the foundation for an integrated personnel management system, in practice further work remains to be done by most organizations to develop other elements of human resources management programmes.

182 . The Inspector had chosen to present the views of the organizations on their experience with post classification, even if they sometimes diverged from the theme of the study. Given the particularity of some organizations, three elements should be noted when applying some of the recommendations:

183 . The salary levels. Organizations such as IAEA, ICAO, ITU, WHO, WIPO and WMO, for instance, need to recruit highly specialized staff for specific programmes. To compete with the outside market, these organizations have to offer an entry level at P-4 or P-5. This leaves no room for career opportunities together with promotions. Although this study does not cover the subject of salaries, the Inspector is of the opinion that careful attention should be given to that question which may, in the near future, either create problems of recruitment of certain qualified staff or increase frustations for those stuck in a post for years without hope for a better career prospect.

184 . Scaling down and underfilling of posts. It has been suggested in some organizations that when a post becomes vacant, some of its responsibilities be divided, enabling its reclassification at a lower grade. Since most organizations - if not all - have indicated that recruitment at the P-1 and P-2 levels has been practically abandoned, this may be a way to revive the practice of using the P-1 and P-2 levels in recruiting junior qualified staff who could move to a higher level if the "linked grades" were introduced. When posts of a more senior (e.g. P-4 or P-5) level become vacant, steps should be taken to scale down the responsibilities to levels at which young staff members may be recruited and at which they can be expected realistically to perform. As the staff members grow in competence, they can be delegated additional responsibilities which would be recognized and rewarded through reclassification to a higher (former) level of the post. Through this flexible and dynamic approach to the organization of work not only could goals of rejuvenation be achieved, but competent and hard-working staff could be rewarded without calling into question the fundamental principles (equal pay for work of equal value and ensuring services to the Organization equivalent in value to the money spent on staff costs) on which job classification is based. However, as mentioned above this may be difficult for organizations which require high level technical expertise and often give contracts of limited duration.

185 . The linked grades. Mechanisms for relief are usually not based on classification per se but are some kind of compromise in the implementation of the system; for instance, through personal promotion (usually above the level of the post on the basis of long service or special performance) or by linking grades, when there is no special review for the higher level of the post,

although the personal performance may be evaluated at the time of the promotion to the higher grade. One option which was discussed several times in the course of the interviews with the Inspector is that of linked grades which would permit staff, when being recruited, to have a notion for a possible career, i.e. one entry grade in which the incumbent would stay for a given probationary period, and then the formal grade of the post as classified, which would only be given on certain conditions. This concept has recently been advocated by the General Assembly, which requested "the Secretary-General to continue efforts to develop further and refine classification and evaluation systems and promotion procedures as an integral part of the vacancy management system, taking into account, inter alia, concepts of career ladders and linked grades, in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission, as appropriate, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session". 7/

186 . The Joint Inspection Unit in a previous report 8/ discussed the notion of linked grades, which it feels are "perfectly compatible with the job classification methods". It justified their use by suggesting that systematic underrecruitment to the lower of two linked grades would achieve economies, and that linked grades would enable some staff members to remain in the same job for say, eight to 10 years with possibilities for promotion. Moreover, the JIU considered that the use of linked grades would improve financial management by reducing the demand for reclassification "on the most diverse pretexts".9/

187 . However, at that time, the ICSC was strongly opposed to the introduction of linked grades, arguing that its use would be detrimental to the concept of career development, as it would provide an incentive for stagnation and complacency, virtually guaranteeing salary increases for up to 20 years. But, at the same time, the ICSC mentioned the possibility of granting a personal promotion for certain staff members under strictly defined conditions.10/

188 . The Inspector, reflecting on the positions expressed, offers recommendations in the following Chapter, bearing in mind that the necessary flexibility should be exercised in their implementation without weakening the basic concept and purpose of the post classification system.

7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth session, Supplement No. 49, (A/45/49).

8/ Second Report on the Career Concept. JIU/REP/82/3, paras. 52-53.

9/ A/36/4332, Annex VI.

10 A/37/30, Supplement 30.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

189 . From his consultations with a number of organizations of the United Nations family and the analysis of their experience with the classification system after ten years of practice, the Inspector considers that a number of recommendations can be presented in order to overcome some of the disadvantages and at the same time enhance the advantages that, without any doubt, the post classification concept provides to the management of these organizations.

190 . It should be underlined once more that the promulgation of the classification system is the responsibility of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), as stipulated in Article 13 of its Statutes. It is left to the administrations of the organizations of the common system to implement it. The following recommendations should therefore be examined in this context.

Recommendation 1 - Reinforcement of the capacity of personnel services

Since most organizations have indicated that their classification staffing is inadequate, either in number or in expertise, and since it is recognized that classification is one of the main cornerstones for an effective management system on which recruitment, promotion, and career development are built, the authority of personnel services should be strengthened. Adequate resources and staffing should be given to personnel offices to enable them to be true decision-making centres, working in close co-operation with programme managers.

In order to revive confidence of staff in their classifiers, the tasks should be entrusted to well-trained specialists, able to work without being subjected to pressure or outside influences, under the umbrella of strengthened personnel services.

Recommendation 2 - Training courses for classifiers and programme managers

As is already done successfully by the UNDP, training courses for classifiers should be organized regularly, taking advantage of this scheme to meet the needs of organizations. Some courses should also be offered to programme managers enabling them to understand the purpose of classification and all aspects of personnel questions.

Recommendation 3 - Automated processes for classification

Despite the existence of a well-established job classification system which provides a sound basis for the classification of professional and higher category posts, the classification of individual posts is still contentious and requires a significant commitment of staff resources. The UNDP and the ILO have proposed a more structured approach to the collection of job information in adapting the Master Standard for application through an

automated medium. Computer-assisted classification is being developed in a number of national services and the Inspector is of the view that, given its many advantages, this automated system should be seriously considered for use in the organizations.

Recommendation 4 - Implementation of the classification results

The filling of posts, once classified by personnel services, should be left to programme managers. For certain key positions the classification and selection of eligible staff should be the responsibility of a more central level.

Recommendation 5 - Information to staff

Staff at large should be carefully informed so as to familiarize them with the concept of classification and persuade them that it is a credible and reliable management tool. It should be made sufficiently clear in order to achieve broad-based acceptance.

Recommendation 6 - Reclassification of posts

Just as with classification, the reclassification of posts should be done by well-trained specialists. The directives for the reclassification of a post should be strictly applied.

It should be reiterated that no post is to be considered for reclassification without taking into consideration the complete manning table of the given department, in order to compare posts. Posts identical in functions and responsibilities should have identical pay and when one is open for reclassification - tasks having increased in volume and responsibility - the others should also be considered.

Recommendation 7 - Appeals mechanisms

The necessity for organizations to have an appeals machinery has been recognized. Where this does not exist, such a machinery should be set up, composed of well-trained specialists, recognized as being objective and independent and whose appointments have been approved by the administrations and the staff. All appeals machinery should be known to staff, as well as their right to use it when the need arises.

Recommendation 8 - Levels of classification of P-1 and P-2 posts

Several organizations - especially those with highly technical posts - find it difficult to attract qualified staff at an entry level of P-1 or P-2 and therefore have abandoned using these levels. A careful study should be carried out by an official body, in order to redress that anomaly and to try to avoid having most professionals recruited at an already high level with no opportunity left for career advancement within the organization. It should be kept in mind, however, that this may be difficult to put into practice in organizations which require high technical expertise, as noted in paragraph 183.

Recommendation 9 - Scaling down and underfilling of posts

In order to attract new and qualified staff, thus rejuvenating the human resources of organizations, a more dynamic approach such as the structuring of job responsibilities through scaling down and underfilling of posts should be pursued, taking into account the particularities of each organization as explained in paragraph 184. The International Civil Service Commission could be invited to examine the feasibility of this approach prior to its eventual application.

Recommendation 10 - Personal promotion and linked grades

A careful feasibility study should also be carried out by the ICSC on the possibility of introducing personal promotion and linked grades in a way which maintains the integrity of the post classification system.

ANNEX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION POST CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM */

"Tier I - The Master Standard

The first tier of the ICSC standards - the "Master Standard" - is designed to apply to all jobs in all occupational groups in all organizations. It is therefore a "horizontal" standard in that it spans all fields of work. Since it covers the widest possible variety of jobs, it is the most general of the three tiers in its applicability to individual jobs (see next page for illustration of the three tiers).

For the Master Standard a points-factor evaluation system was selected. This system measures the relative value of jobs by awarding points to jobs according to each of the various factors of work which go to make up the jobs. Simply stated, the various factors (knowledge required, difficulty of work, etc.) are determined, levels of importance within each factor defined, points allocated to each factor (and level) according to its importance to the organization, and grade-determining points ranges established. A job is then analyzed to determine which of the levels of each factor applies: it is awarded the corresponding points and its grade is determined by the points range within which the total of points falls.

The system is analytical, quantitative and objective and prescribes an orderly approach to the analysis and evaluation of jobs since it requires the consideration and rating of a number of factors of work which go to make up the jobs. The scoring of the system provides a clear record of the job analyst's judgment (x points for Factor 1). This helps isolate issues in controversial cases, since the differences in overall appreciation of a job among two or more analysts can be pinned down to specific factors and levels within these. Without constituting a fully scientific scale of measurement that would result in a mechanical approach to evaluating jobs, the system does provide job analysts with a basis for more objective judgments in determining relative job values. Perhaps its greatest advantage is that it is particularly well-suited for application to jobs in a variety of occupations and which consist of differing combinations of tasks - characteristics descriptive of the jobs in the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

Development of the Master Standard was begun in late 1977 with the choice of factors. Factors were selected which were reflective of the nature of work in the United Nations system. While many of the factors chosen are those commonly found in other classification systems, modifications and special interpretations of the meanings of these had to be made to reflect the distinctive international character of work and organizational structure peculiar to the United Nations system. In all, 15 different factors were selected. These were ultimately grouped together in matrix form in 6 major factors, the 15 factors becoming "elements" of these 6:

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*/ Source: Excerpts from Terry Slater: "Development of Job Classification Standards in the United Nations", in Public Personnel Management Journal, 1982, pp. 301-306 and 310-312.

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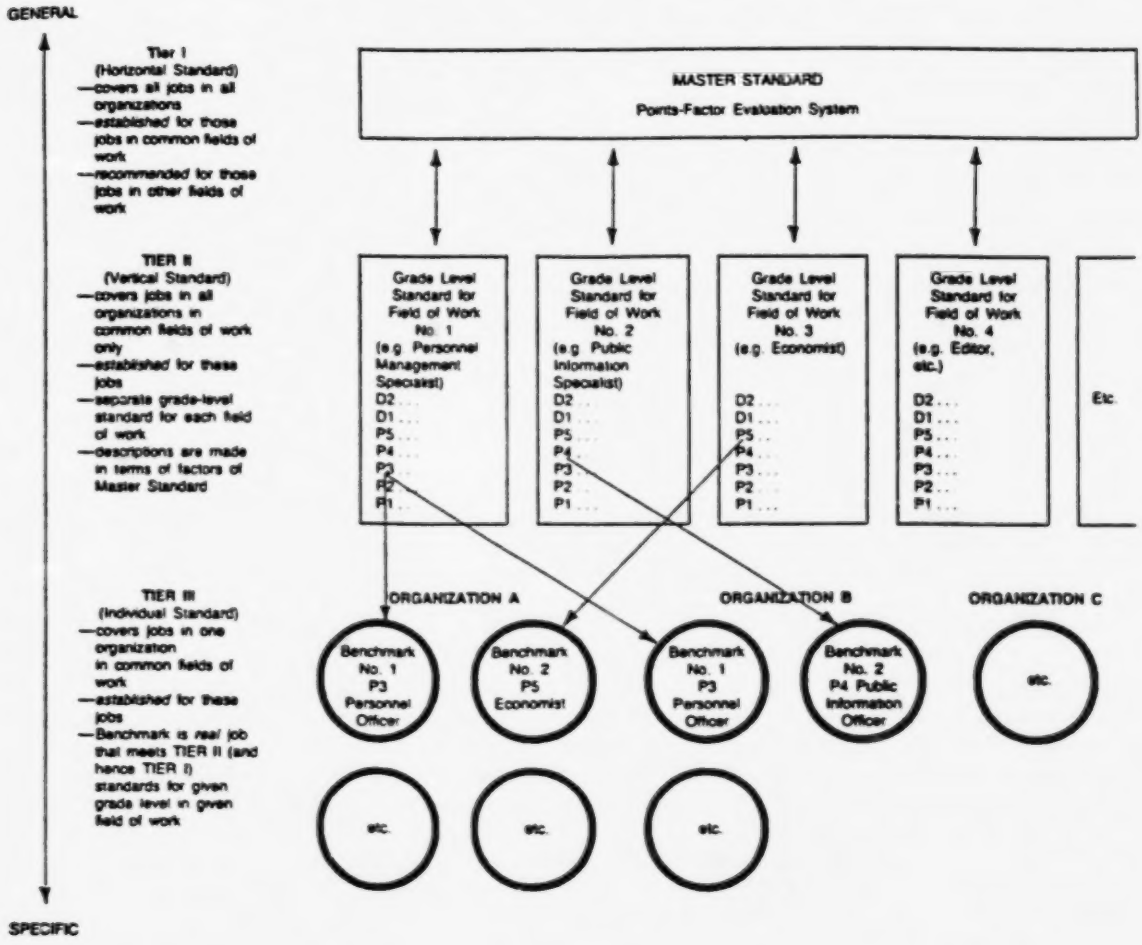
FIGURE 1

The Three Tiers of the ICSC Job Classification Standards


GENERAL
Tier I
(Horizontal Standard)
—covers all jobs in all organizations
—established for those jobs in common fields of work
—recommended for those jobs in other fields of work
TIER II
(Vertical Standard)
—covers jobs in all organizations in common fields of work only
—established for these jobs
—separate grade-level standard for each field of work
—descriptions are made in terms of factors of Master Standard
TIER III
(Individual Standard)
—covers jobs in one organization in common fields of work
—established for these jobs
—Benchmark is real job that meets TIER II (and hence TIER I) standards for given grade level in given field of work
SPECIFIC
MASTER STANDARD
Points-Factor Evaluation System
Grade Level Standard for Field of Work No. 1 (e.g. Personnel Management Specialist)
D2 . . .
D1 . . .
P5 . . .
P4 . . .
P3 . . .
P2 . . .
P1 . . .
Grade Level Standard for Field of Work No. 2 (e.g. Public Information Specialist)
Grade Level Standard for Field of Work No. 3 (e.g. Economist)
Grade Level Standard for Field of Work No. 4 (e.g. Editor, etc.)
Etc.
ORGANIZATION A
ORGANIZATION B
ORGANIZATION C
Benchmark No. 1 P3 Personnel Officer
Benchmark No. 2 P5 Economist
Benchmark No. 1 P3 Personnel Officer
Benchmark No. 2 P4 Public Information Officer
etc.
etc.
etc.
etc.

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Factor I - Professional Knowledge Required
Theoretical knowledge required
Practical experience required
Language knowledge required

Factor II - Difficulty of Work
Individual contribution
Complexity of work

Factor III - Independence of Work
Application of guidelines
Supervisory controls over incumbent

Factor IV - Work Relationships
Skill of contacts inside the organization
Importance of contacts inside the organization
Skill of contacts outside the organization
Importance of contacts outside the organization

Factor V - Supervisor Responsibility
Direct responsibility for technical and administrative support staff
Direct responsibility for Professional staff

Factor VI - Impact of Work
Effect on work
Consequence of involuntary errors

How the factors of the Master Standard reflect the special international character of work and organizational structure of the United Nations and specialized agencies is best illustrated by examining in detail a few of the factors.

Factor I is the only three-dimensional factor combining the three types of knowledge required for all United Nations jobs. The horizontal element "theoretical knowledge required" would seem simple enough to apply viewed from the context of one country. But difficulties quickly arise in an organization employing people from over 150 different countries in which the educational systems differ immensely. Certain basic degree equivalents had to be established to ensure a uniform and consistent interpretation of "first", "second" and "highest" university degree level by job analysts from different cultural and educational backgrounds. Thus, a glossary of the terms used in the factors was established. It defines, among other things, each of the degree levels and gives examples of the different educational institutions (such as College of Advanced Education, Polytechnique, Fachhochschule, Institute of Technology, etc., in level 1) and the degrees (such as Ph.D., D.Sci., LL.D., Doctorat d'Etat, etc. in level 3) in different national educational systems.

The need to establish a glossary that defines some 50 different terms used in the Master Standard is itself testimony to the international character of the evaluation instrument. While most classification systems used in private enterprise and national civil services, as well as those marketed by consulting firms, get by without such a tool, the glossary was essential for the United Nations system.

Ostensibly clear terms were potentially open to as many different connotations as the different cultural backgrounds of the analysts called upon to use them. Even further confusion was possible since many of these analysts, when working in one of the official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) were not working in their own mother tongue. The Master Standard itself and the glossary of terms were translated into each of these official languages.

The vertical element of Factor I -practical experience required, (see table 1) reflects both the importance of the minimum years of professional experience required for the successful performance of any job as well as the premium given in the United Nations for experience at the international level -that is, experience gained in work which has effects crossing national boundaries or work in a national context other than that of the incumbent. The need to stress experience at the international level has been borne out over the years by the examples of people recognized as "experts" of their profession in their own country and having perfect employment "track records" who failed in United Nations projects of development cooperation or international diplomacy because they were not able to transpose effectively their knowledge and skills to different political, cultural or social environments.

The diagonal element, language knowledge required, is a factor which is peculiar to international organizations. While all professional-level employees are required to have proficiency in two official languages before entering the system (both to ensure a certain potential for career development and to foster and encourage communication among staff members), not all jobs require such proficiency. Some jobs, albeit few, require only one language, whereas others require three or more. Extra credit is given under this element for jobs requiring proficiency in two or three or more languages. These languages need not be the official ones, thus, credit can be given to a relations specialist job in Addis Ababa which requires Amharic as well as English, or to a buyer's job in Geneva which requires German in addition to French and English.

The horizontal element of Factor VI - impact of work - (see table 2) is interesting in that it illustrates two unique characteristics of the organization of work in the international civil service: the importance of recommendations or proposals in addition to decisions and the indirect impact of jobs. Classification plans in the private sector often measure impact by the level of authority given to the position to make decisions and by the direct responsibility for managing money. The former is often set down in clearly defined manuals of delegation of authority that indicate which position can authorize different levels of expenditure or approve product designs or make industrial engineering changes which affect manufacturing processes. The latter is frequently measured by the size of the production or purchasing budget, investment portfolio or profit center for which the position is responsible. National civil services may differ from the private sector by measuring only delegated decision-making authority (authority to grant customs approval, or approve social security benefits or issue press releases). This is because, more often than not, there is little impact the public sector manager can have on the budget he or she "manages", since it is closely controlled by detailed financial regulations defining under what conditions expenditures can be made and the necessity of obtaining several levels of approvals before committing funds of any magnitude.

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TABLE 1

Factor I

Professional Knowledge Required

This factor measures the theoretical knowledge and practical experience of applying that knowledge that is required by the job.

Theoretical knowledge required / Practical experience required	1. Knowledge at first university degree level or its equivalent in training and self-study.	2. Knowledge at advanced university degree level or its equivalent in training and self-study.	3. Knowledge at highest university degree level or its equivalent in training and self-study
A. No experience required.	100 150 200	200 250 300	300 350 400
B. Experience in applying theoretical knowledge at national level for up to five years or at international level for up to two years.	150 200 250	250 300 350	350 400 450
C. Experience in applying theoretical knowledge at national level for over five, up to ten years OR at international level for over two, up to five years.	200 250 300	300 350 400	400 450 500
D. Both of the above.	250 300 350	350 400 450	450 500 550
E. Experience in applying theoretical knowledge at national level for over ten years OR at international level for over five, up to ten years.	300 350 400	400 450 500	500 550 600
F. Both of the above	350 400 450	450 500 550	550 600 650
G. Experience in applying theoretical knowledge at international level for over ten years.	400 450 500	500 550 600	600 650 700

Language Knowledge Required			
	The *job requires* that the incumbent have proficiency[a] in one working language of the organization. (0 points)	The *job requires* that the incumbent have proficiency in two working languages of the organization. (+ 50 points)	The *job requires* that the incumbent have proficiency in a third language as well as in two working languages of the organization. (+ 100 points)

[a] "Proficiency" is defined as: "A working knowledge, sufficient to permit a speaker to take part in ordinary conversations, to attend meetings, understand what is said there and make his own contribution, to write about official matters from one office to another within the organization, in a language which, while not necessarily perfect, avoids the grosser grammatical and syntactical errors and is readily comprehensible."

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The United Nations system, like national civil services, does not use money management as a classification factor. However, it goes a step further than a national civil service by giving significant credit under this factor to positions which are required to make proposals or recommendations in addition to or in lieu of making decisions. Many positions are delegated specific decision-making responsibility, hence, credit is given for decisions. However, many more positions are expected to provide the proposal or recommendation upon which a committee or board or body will make the final decision: the recommendation to recruit someone which is decided by a Selection Committee or the proposal to publish a study which is decided by a Publications Board; the plan for a vocational training center in a given country to be decided by the Ministry of Labor, or the preparation of a draft resolution which is later approved by the General Assembly. Since the decision-making process in the United Nations is a collegiate one, the power being shared among many parties, significant credit is given in the Master Standard to the position required to produce the proposal or recommendation on which action will normally be taken.

Another characteristic of the organization of work brought out by this factor is the indirect nature of impact. In national civil services and private corporations decisions made characteristically have a more immediate and direct effect on the organization but are limited in extent to fewer activities and smaller numbers of people. In the United Nations system, on the other hand, the effect of decisions and proposals is less direct but the extent of the impact is potentially far greater. An example would be the formulation of a proposal of a technical cooperation project to develop an econometric model to aid national planning authorities in influencing a developing nation's economy. The proposal would have to be cleared countless times by different types and levels of authority, and the full magnitude of the impact could only be felt several years later, but the effect could be to influence significantly not only the economic but social and political fiber of the entire country and, indeed, surrounding countries which are partners in trade. The higher reaches of this factor therefore give credit to United Nations jobs whose impact crosses national boundaries and concerns the well-being of large numbers of people.

TABLE 2
Factor VI
Impact of Work

This factor measures the importance of decisions and proposals on the Organization's objectives and the consequences of involuntary errors on such objectives.

Effect on work / Consequences of involuntary errors	30. *Decisions* are rarely, if ever made. *Proposals*, if accepted, affect the work of the immediate organizational unit.	31. *Decisions* made are limited to methods of work or individual cases. *Proposals*, if accepted, directly affect the accuracy, reliability and acceptability of further processes or services.	32. *Decisions* made directly affect the accuracy, reliability and acceptability of further processes or services. *Proposals*, if accepted, directly affect the design or operation of systems, programmes or types of equipment.	33. *Decisions* made directly affect the design or operation of systems, programmes or types of equipment. *Proposals*, if accepted, directly affect the design or operation of major systems, programmes or types of equipment.	34. *Decisions* made directly affect the design or oporation of major systems, programmes or types of equipment. *Proposals*, if accepted, directly affect a wide range of the Organization's activities, other organizations, national governments or the well-being of large numbers of people.	35. *Decisions* made directly affect a wide range of the Organization's activities. *Proposals*, if accepted, have a direct and substantial effect on other organizations, national governments or the well-being of large numbers of people.	36. *Decisions* made have a direct and substantial effect on a wide range of the Organization's activities. *Proposals*, if accepted, substantially influence the overall future direction of the Organization and have a direct and substantial effect on other organizations, national governments and the well-being of large numbers of people.
c. Errors normally would cause damage only to incumbent.	90	140	195	250	310	370	440
d. Errors normally would cause damage to the work of the immediate organizational unit.	130	180	235	290	350	410	480
e. Errors normally would cause some damage to Organization's programmes in terms of time, quality or money.	170	220	275	330	390	450	520
f. Errors normally would cause significant damage to Organization's programmes in terms of time, quality or money.	210	260	315	370	430	490	560
g. Errors would cause significant damage to Organization's major objectives and commitments to constituents.	250	300	355	410	470	530	600

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Tier II

The second tier of the ICSC Standards is composed of grade descriptive or narrative standards, describing for each grade within a specific field of work the typical level of duties and responsibilities found at that grade level. Tier II is a vertical standard in that it covers jobs only within a given field of work. However, all typical jobs from the lowest to the highest grade level within each field of work are covered. Tier II is more specific than Tier I in its applicability to individual jobs.

Each Tier II standard begins with a definition of the field of work and a statement as to which types of jobs are included and excluded from the field of work. It then provides a brief description of the typical duties performed at each grade level as well as a description according to each of the elements and factors of Tier I, the Master Standard, of the requirements found at the grade level in question. For example, the Tier II economist standard for the P-3 grade begins with a description of the typical duties and responsibilities carried out by economists at the P-3 level and then describes the theoretical knowledge, practical experience and language knowledge required (Factor I); the individual contribution and complexity of work (Factor II); the guidelines that apply and the supervisory controls over the incumbent (Factor III) and so on for each of the 6 factors and 15 elements of the Master Standard. Along with each factor description, the appropriate points values allocated in accordance with the Master Standard are indicated as well as the total points value for the standard which places it within the appropriate grade-determining points range.

By specifically relating the second tier of the common system job classification standards back to Tier I, the Master Standard, it is ensured that both tiers will arrive at the same grade result when applied to a given job. In fact, the Tier II standards actually explain how a typical job at a given grade level within a given field of work is evaluated according to Tier I. The Tier II standards, therefore, provide added insurance, beyond the use of the Master Standard alone, that each of the organizations of the United Nations system will arrive at the same grade level when evaluating similar typical jobs within each field of work.

Tier II standards are to be developed only for the most populated and most common fields of work found in the organizations of the common system. Thus, Tier II standards will be formulated for such fields as personnel management specialists, technical cooperation administrators, editors, accountants, public information specialists, etc., which exist in most organizations but not for such fields as telecommunication engineers or nurses which exist almost exclusively in one organization only (ITU and WHO respectively).

Tier III

The Tier III standards are composed of benchmarks. Tier III is the most specific of the three tiers in that it covers jobs at a given grade level within a single field of work within one organization only. Simply stated, a benchmark is a real job existing within a given organization which is identical to the typical job described in Tier II."

ANNEX II

THE COMMON CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS (CCOG) (Excerpts)*/

I. Background and introduction

1. The Common Classification of Occupational Groups (CCOG) was promulgated by the ICSC at its tenth session (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/34/30), paras. 184 - 188 and annex XI). The purpose of CCOG was to provide a framework within which occupational data would be compiled or exchanged for all interorganizational personnel matters. CCOG was subsequently identified as an element necessary for human resources planning.

2. CCOG includes definitions of most of the individual occupations existing within the organizations of the common system, and a schema for systematic coding of each occupation. The definitions of occupations in CCOG are based on the current state of the development of the fields of work in the United Nations common system. CCOG is applicable to Professional and non-Professional jobs existing in the organizations of the common system. The schema and the definitions are pragmatically based on work as it exists within the organizations of the United Nations common system.

3. At its tenth session, the Commission had decided that its secretariat should effect future changes to CCOG, after consulting representatives of the organizations and the staff, and report those changes to the Commission as required. A first revision of CCOG (ICSC/R.187/Rev.1) containing a number of amendments to professional, managerial and technical occupations was presented to the Commission at its seventeenth session in March 1983 (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/38/30), paras. 126 - 129). A second revision of CCOG (ICSC/R.187/Rev.2) was submitted to the Commission at its twenty-sixth session in July 1987 (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/42/30), para. 247).

II. Instructions for identifying the CCOG code of a job

1. The first step in identifying the CCOG code of a position is to define clearly the duties of the job. This is necessary, as the code is determined on the basis of the nature of the work. Job titles, organizational context and qualifications of incumbents may provide useful information to understanding the nature of the work. However, the official job description is generally the best source of information.

2. Next, the work of the job should be identified tentatively within one of the job families. In CCOG, each job family is identified with a capital letter code, e.g., code "A" for administrative specialists. Many job families include work in occupational groups 1 (Professional, managerial and technical work) and 2 (support work related to Professional occupations). Where this is the case, the occupational group of the job should be identified by comparing the work of the job in respect to the CCOG definitions, bearing in mind that the codes reflect the common practices of organizations.

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*/ Source: Job Classification Manual for the Classification of Professional Posts, ICSC Personnel Policies Division, 1987.

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3. When the job family has been identified, the job may be associated with one of the fields of work within that job family (e.g., within code "A", with code "5", electronic data-processing specialists). Then, the job is identified with one of the occupations within that field of work (e.g., within code "5" with "b", system analysts). If the job fits reasonably within a code identified tentatively and does not fit as well into any other CCOG code, the tentative code may be regarded as the correct one (e.g., 1.A.05.b., systems analysts). This completes the common system CCOG code for that job. It should be noted, however, that individual organizations may establish their own codes for subgroups within specializations, (e.g.., 1.A.05.b.01., systems analysts-administrative applications, or 1.A.05.b.02., systems analysts-programme monitoring). Instructions for further coding will be issued by the organization concerned.

What is a reasonable "fit"

4. One objective of CCOG is to provide sufficient information to identify a code for each job. However, considering the large number of codes involved, it is necessary to limit the length of the definition of each job.

5. Similarly, the "operating" work of non-professional support jobs has been defined, though many of these jobs will customarily involve such additional functions as typing, filing, answering the telephone and maintaining appointment calendars. These functions may be incidental to work whose primary focus is the subject-matter of a programme or project and where the technical, procedural and record-keeping duties require a practical knowledge and application of subject-matter skills. Such jobs are assignable to the subject-related support code.

6. Another consequence of the brevity of CCOG definitions is that not all duties of all jobs that fit into a category (e.g., 1.A.05.b., systems analysts) are included in the definition. Each definition provides a minimum description of duties necessary for the selection of a job code. So, the "fit" of a job within a code is "reasonable" if, upon review of the initial identification of a code, no other code is more compatible with the work.

Coding "mixed" jobs

7. Many jobs include duties typical of other jobs, for example, 1.L.02., historians, requires the incumbent to organize and evaluate authenticity of data, as does 1.L.01., anthropologists; and 1.A.06.e., recruitment specialists, requires the incumbent to provide information about working conditions, as does 1.A.06.d., personnel entitlements specialists. Even so, it is usually possible to identify each job with a CCOG code that is a "reasonable fit".

8. However, some jobs have more than one major focus. In some cases, this may signify an occupation which has emerged from occupations once separate (e.g., 1.H.02.c., biochemists). In other cases it may signify an expedient combination of duties in one job (e.g., of all personnel functions in a small office). It may also signify the type of "generalization" often characteristic of director jobs (e.g., directors of personnel), the duties of which, although within a field of work (e.g., 1.A.06., personnel management specialists), still cannot be identified with a particular occupation within that field.

9. Combinations of duties within a job may include combinations of fields of work as well as combinations of occupations; for example, the work of general education advisers to a country may involve a combination of duties typical of a combination of fields of work within the job family of 1.F., education specialists.

10. All jobs which, even after careful analysis can be seen to include combinations of coded occupations (e.g., directors of personnel) or combinations of fields of work (e.g., general education advisers), and for which combinations no appropriate code exists, are coded at their level of combination, be it at the level at which occupations are combined (field of work, e.g., 1.A.06., personnel management specialists), or the level at which several fields of work are combined (job family, e.g., 1.F., education specialists).

11. Some jobs represent combinations of job families. For example, the work of environmental scientists is characterized by the application of principles and techniques of a variety of job families (e.g., 1.E., economists; 1.H., life scientists; 1.J., physical scientists). As in the case of environmental scientists, almost all of these jobs can be identified with an appropriate code (e.g., 1.R.01., environmental scientists).

Jobs for which no code is published

12. Some jobs may have no code, even though they are recognized as among occupations that are within a coded field of work (e.g., cryptography specialists is an occupation within the field of work of 1.M.01., mathematicians and actuaries). Such jobs are coded within their appropriate field of work with the occupational code "z". (e.g., cryptography specialists would be coded 1.M.01.z.).

13. Other jobs that have no code may not be within recognized occupations but may be clearly within a job family. For example, education economists are clearly within the job family 1.E. economists, but are not within any of the coded fields of work. Such jobs are coded within their appropriate job family with the field of work code of "99". Thus, education economists could be coded 1.E.99.

14. Some jobs cannot be identified within a coded field of work neither within a coded job family nor within a combination of the work of other job families. Professional jobs of this nature are coded "1.P.", "Professional, managerial and technical specialists for which no job family exists". Support jobs of this nature may be coded "2.P.", and trades jobs of this nature may be coded "3.P.".